

May 22, 1966

#A109

(AGENCIES & RADIO OUT)

CPYRGHT

(1,400)

ADVANCE FOR SUNDAY AMS, MAY 22

(ADVANCE) WASHINGTON--2ND ADD, THE PERSONALIZED PRESIDENCY

(A104) X X X ALL JOE.

IN THE LONG HOURS AND FURIOUS ENERGY HE GIVES HIS JOB, THIS PRESIDENT APPEARS TO REFLECT AN INSTINCTIVE ASSUMPTION, THAT EVERYBODY WANTS TO WORK THAT LONG AND HARD.

"HE LIVES IN A WORLD OF ACHIEVEMENT AND ASSUMES YOU DO, TOO," SAYS A MAN WHO HAS WORKED CLOSELY WITH JOHNSON SINCE HIS SENATE DAYS. "IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A REPORTER, BE ANOTHER RICHARD HARDING DAVIS; A CHEMIST, ANOTHER LOUIS PASTEUR; AN ENGINEER, ANOTHER GEORGE GOETHALS.

"IF YOU'RE SENATE MAJORITY LEADER, BE THE BEST EVER. IF YOU'RE PILING UP A LEGISLATIVE RECORD, PILE UP THE BIGGEST. IF YOU'RE PRESIDENT, BE THE GREATEST. HE THINKS IN TERMS OF SUPERLATIVES. HIS WORLD IS ONE OF CONSTANT STRIVING. MOST OF US GET TIRED OF STRIVING ALL DAY. NOT LYNDON JOHNSON."

THIS SAME KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCE ALSO HAS A THEORY ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKABLE PURSUIT OF DETAIL. IT RELATES, HE SAYS, TO THE SOUTHWEST IN WHICH JOHNSON GREW UP, WHERE PEOPLE HAD TO LEARN TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT, TO DOCTOR THEIR OWN SICK, TO FIX THEIR OWN TRACTORS.

"HE IS FOND OF RECALLING A FRIEND'S ADMONITION: 'THE BEST WAY TO FERTILIZE YOUR LAND IS WITH THE OWNER'S OWN TRACKS.' IN OTHER WORDS, IF SOMETHING NEEDS DOING, YOU PERSONALLY SEE THAT IT'S DONE."

THE PRESIDENT LIVES, TOO, IN A WORLD OF ACTION, SAYS ANOTHER MAN WHO HAS OBSERVED HIM CLOSELY. LONG REFLECTION AND PROTRACTED DISCUSSION MAKE HIM IMPATIENT. "I WANT ACTION," HE TELLS AIDES, AND THEN HE SPELLS IT OUT FOR EMPHASIS, "A--C--T--I--O--N."

HE HAS TO KNOW MUCH ABOUT MANY SUBJECTS AND ASSUMES HIS ASSISTANTS DO, TOO. THUS, AT THE END OF THE DAY, WHEN HE'S SIGNING THINGS--LEGISLATION, LETTERS, EXECUTIVE ORDERS OR PICTURES--HE HANDS THEM BACK, WITHOUT TURNING, TO WHICHEVER ASSISTANT HAPPENS TO BE BEHIND HIM. HE ASSUMES THAT PERSON KNOWS WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.

#A110

AS PRESIDENT, JOHNSON RARELY TRAVELS ABROAD TO PRACTICE PERSONAL DIPLOMACY BUT AT HOME HIS PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS CAN BE PRODIGIOUS. WHEN PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI OF INDIA VISITED WASHINGTON, THE PRESIDENT GAVE HER SO MUCH TIME, SAYS A HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL, "THEY WERE PRACTICALLY GOING STEADY. BUT THE PRESIDENT HAD A PURPOSE AND THAT WAS TO SYMBOLIZE TO ALL OF ASIA HIS CONCERN FOR INDIA."

FOR THE SAME REASON, THIS OFFICIAL SAYS, IT WAS NOT SIMPLY IMPULSE THAT PROMPTED JOHNSON TO DROP IN ON THE RECEPTION FOR MRS. GANDHI AT THE INDIAN EMBASSY, WHERE HE WAS NOT EXPECTED. THE IMPRESSION OF IMPULSIVENESS WAS HEIGHTENED BY THE SUDDEN GAME OF MUSICAL CHAIRS AT DINNER, WHERE HUBERT HUMPHREY GAVE HIS SEAT TO THE PRESIDENT, DEAN RUSK YIELDED TO HUMPHREY, CHESTER BOWLES MOVED OVER FOR RUSK AND WAY DOWN AT THE END OF THE PROTOCOL CHAIN A MINOR INDIAN SECRETARY HAD TO GO TO BLAIR HOUSE FOR DINNER.